



Risk Factors:

- **Genetics/Heredity**
- **Gender**
Each year the number of people who have a stroke for the first time is about 19% higher for males than females.
- **High blood pressure**
The most important risk factor for stroke
- **Physical inactivity**
Obesity doubles the risk for developing high blood pressure.
- **Stress**
- **Tobacco use**
The risk of ischemic stroke in smokers is about double that of nonsmokers.
- **Heavy alcohol consumption**
Excessive drinking (more than 1 drink for women and 2 for men daily) can lead to an increase in blood pressure.
- **Heart disease**
Those with heart disease have twice the risk of stroke than those without heart disease.
- **Oral contraceptive use**

Warning Signs:

- Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm, or leg.
- Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding.
- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness or loss of balance or coordination.
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes.
- Sudden severe headache with no known cause.
- Sudden chest pain.

If you or someone you know has these symptoms, don't delay!

Call 9-1-1 immediately



Introduction to

Stroke

Stroke is a disease of the blood vessels that occurs when blood and oxygen are unable to reach the brain because a blood vessel is blocked (Ischemic) or bursts (Hemorrhagic). Without blood giving the brain proper nutrients including oxygen, tissues begin to die.

Ischemic strokes account for 83% of all strokes. Blood gets blocked by a clot and has trouble moving through the blood vessel. The clot can develop right in the brain or travel to the brain from another part of the body.

Hemorrhagic strokes account for 17% of all strokes. A blood vessel that supplies blood to the brain bursts and lets blood out into the brain.

Transient ischemic attacks occur when a blood vessel that supplies blood to the brain is blocked for a short period of time. This is called a "warning stroke" because it can predict a big stroke in the future.

Physical Effects

- **Spasticity:** involuntary movement of muscles.
- **Poor balance**
- **Pain**
- **Paralysis**
- **Vision problems**
- **Memory loss**

Facts

- On average, someone in the U.S. will have a stroke every 40 seconds.
- Stroke is the leading cause of disability in the U.S.

Resources

American Stroke Association

<http://www.strokeassociation.org>

National Stroke Association

<http://www.stroke.org>

Prevention

- **Physical activity/healthful eating**
 - Eat five servings of fruit and vegetables every day to reduce the risk of stroke by 30%.
 - Spend at least 2 hours and 30 minutes every week doing exercises at moderate intensity such as brisk walking.
- **Lower blood cholesterol**
Eat healthful foods that are high in fiber and low in fat.
- **Lower blood pressure**
Manage stress and eat a healthful diet.
- **Moderate alcohol consumption**
Women should drink no more than 1 drink per day and men should drink no more than 2.

For more information and data, go to www.SDHealthStatistics.com

Community Health Statistics Unit:
619-285-6479